

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MNUC, PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: UK VIEWS ON GRAY AREA ARMS CONTROL

1. UK EMBOFF (REEVE) CALLED ON DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PM
GOMPERT MAY 10 ON INSTRUCTIONS TO PRESENT UK VIEWS ON GRAY
AREA ARMS CONTROL, WHICH HE SAID REFLECTED MINISTERIAL CON-
SIDERATION. HE MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- IN UK VIEW, GENERAL ARMS CONTROL CONSIDERATIONS PROVIDE
A STRONG ARGUMENT FOR ENCOURAGING POSSIBILITY OF EXTENDING
FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS TO INCLUDE GRAY AREA SYSTEMS. SPECIFIC-
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ALLY, THEY BELIEVE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH HAD AS THEIR OBJEC-
TIVE IMPOSITION OF RESTRAINTS ON SOVIET IR/MR SYSTEMS TAR-
GETTED AT EUROPE WOULD RESPOND TO CONCERN AMONG EUROPEAN
MEMBERS OF ALLIANCE ABOUT THESE SYSTEMS.

-- ON THE OTHER HAND, UK FEELS IT IS VERY UNLIKELY THAT WE
WOULD SUCCEED IN IMPOSING LIMITATIONS ON SOVIET SYSTEMS

WHICH WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE THEIR CAPABILITY TO DESTROY EUROPE, GIVEN PRESENT PREPONDERANCE OF SOVIET THEATER FORCES.

-- MOREOVER, IN RETURN FOR ANY SOVIET LIMITATIONS, WE MIGHT HAVE TO ACCEPT RESTRAINTS ON NATO SYSTEMS WHICH WOULD

SERIOUSLY IMPAIR THE ALLIANCE'S MILITARY CAPABILITY, MIGHT GIVE RISE TO CONCERN ABOUT DECOUPLING, AND COULD THEREFORE WEAKEN THE SECURITY OF THE ALLIANCE.

-- SUCH RESTRAINTS ON NATO SYSTEMS COULD INCLUDE LIMITATIONS ON THE UK POLARIS FORCE WHICH WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE. HE SAID IT WAS ASSUMED US RECOGNIZED THERE COULD BE NO DISCUSSION OF BRITISH SYSTEMS WITHOUT UK BEING PRESENT.

-- POTENTIALLY VALUABLE CRUISE MISSILE OPTIONS MIGHT BE CLOSED OFF IN A GRAY AREA NEGOTIATION.

-- IN VIEW OF THESE POINTS, AND SINCE THE UK HAS NOT SEEN EVIDENCE YET THAT THE SOVIET UNION INTENDS TO MAKE INCLUSION OF GRAY AREA SYSTEMS A "STICKING POINT" IN THE CONTINUATION OF SALT, THE UK BELIEVES THAT IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES THE BALANCE OF ADVANTAGE LIES IN THE CONTINUED EXCLUSION OF GRAY AREA SYSTEMS FROM ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS. UK RECOGNIZES, HOWEVER, THAT SITUATION IS EVOLVING,
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AND WILL THEREFORE KEEP THEIR POSITION UNDER REVIEW.

-- AS FOR THE STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES FOR SALT III, THE UK AGREES WITH THE US POLICY OF HANDLING MATTERS SO AS TO LEAVE THE ALLIANCE'S OPTIONS OPEN. THEY FEEL, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS ROOM FOR DISCUSSION WHETHER THIS WOULD BEST BE ACHIEVED BY THE US RESPONDING TO A SOVIET UNILATERAL STATEMENT ON FBS WITH A UNILATERAL STATEMENT OF ITS OWN OF THE KIND PUT FORWARD IN THE ALLIANCE, WHICH THE UK BELIEVES RISKS BEING INTERPRETED AS AN INVITATION TO DISCUSS GRAY AREA SYSTEMS AND IMPLIES ACCEPTANCE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEGOTIATION ABOUT THEM, OR BY THE US SAYING NOTHING AT ALL, WHICH WOULD BE UK PREFERENCE. UK RECOGNIZES, HOWEVER, THAT SINCE THE RUSSIANS WERE ONLY INDUCED TO DROP FBS FROM SALT II BECAUSE THE US THREATENED TO INCLUDE ALL GRAY AREA SYSTEMS ON THE SOVIET SIDE, THE US MAY FEEL IT CANNOT AVOID MAKING A UNILATERAL STATEMENT OF ITS OWN. IF IT DOES, UK WOULD EXPECT TO BE CONSULTED FURTHER ABOUT ITS CONTENT.

-- UK WOULD EXPECT TO TAKE THIS LINE IN ANY FURTHER DISCUSSION IN NATO.

2. GOMPERT REMARKED THAT UK APPEARED TO BELIEVE IT UN-
LIKELY THE SOVIETS WOULD MAKE AN ISSUE OF INCLUSION OF US
GRAY AREA SYSTEMS IN SALT III. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT
CRUISE MISSILES WERE ALREADY IN THE SALT II PROTOCOL, AND
THERE WAS AN EXPECTATION THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD CERTAINLY
SEEK TO DISCUSS LIMITATIONS ON THEM FOLLOWING THE EXPIRA-
TION OF THE PROTOCOL. REEVE, WHOSE COMMENTS SHOULD BE

CONSIDERED PERSONAL AND INFORMAL, RESPONDED THAT THE UK
WAS PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN THE QUESTION OF WHETHER NEGO-
TIATIONS ON GRAY AREA SYSTEMS WERE ENTERED INTO AT ALL.
HE SAID UK HAD THOUGHT THERE WAS SOME UNCERTAINTY, BUT
NOTED THE POINT THAT IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO EXCLUDE
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CONSIDERATION OF SUCH SYSTEMS. RETURNING TO THE PROTOCOL,
REEVE NOTED HMG UNDERSTANDING THAT IT WAS TEMPORARY, AND
THAT ITS PROVISIONS WOULD EXPIRE WITH IT, LEAVING ALL OF
OUR OPTIONS FREE. THIS WAS THE BASIS ON WHICH IT HAD
BEEN PRESENTED TO THEM AND THEY HAD ACCEPTED IT. GOMPERT
NOTED THAT THIS WAS SO, BUT THAT THERE WAS AN UNDER-
STANDING, IN THE SALT III PRINCIPLES, THAT TOPICS COVERED
IN THE PROTOCOL WOULD BE SUBJECTS OF DISCUSSION IN SALT
III. REEVE MADE CLEAR THAT HMG OPPOSITION TO CONSIDERA-
TION OF GRAY AREA SYSTEMS WAS NOT FOCUSED ON ANY PARTICU-
LAR FORUM IN WHICH THERE MIGHT BE NEGOTIATION ON GRAY
AREA SYSTEMS, BUT WAS CONCERNED WITH ANY NEGOTIATIONS
ABOUT GRAY AREA SYSTEMS, IN ANY FORUM. THE UK BELIEVES IT
WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO HAVE ANY CONSIDERATION OF GRAY
AREA SYSTEMS, EVEN US AND SOVIET SYSTEMS, WITHOUT AFFECT-
ING UK SYSTEMS -- TO WHICH THE UK WOULD BE OPPOSED. THE
UK WOULD, OF COURSE, WANT TO BE A PARTICIPANT IF UK
SYSTEMS WERE CONSIDERED, OR EVEN IF THERE WERE TO BE CON-
SIDERATION OF AN ALLOWANCE BY THE US FOR UK SYSTEMS, TO
WHICH THEY WOULD ALSO BE OPPOSED.

3. REEVE SAID UK WOULD APPRECIATE ANY US COMMENTS ON UK
POINTS. HE ALSO INDICATED THAT UK WOULD BE BRIEFING THE
FRG ON THEIR THINKING AT UK-FRG BILATERAL MAY 15-17. VANCE

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